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because they wish it to be true, their desires misleading their judgment. And there is a tendency, illogical but not unnatural, to conclude from this that there can be no reasons which would resist a more impartial scrutiny. And, on a similar principle, the almost unanimous acquiescence of Revealed Religions in the belief has discredited it in the eyes of many of those who hold none of those religions. The only way to escape from these negative presumptions seems to lie in metaphysical considerations. Nor is it, perhaps, very surprising that no other method should be adequate for the determination of a question so strictly metaphysical.

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MARRIAGE AS AN ECONOMIC INSTITUTION.

Commercial views of marriage are justly deprecated nowadays in opinion, if not in practice, by the majority of thoughtful men. Yet there is a sense in which these views would give rise to greater mental refinement and higher moral standards than we derive from the idea that marriages are made in heaven. That this idea is a false one, the Bible, by which many of us wish to be guided, explicitly teaches us. The founder of the most spiritual religion which has ever educated the world, expressly states that marriage is earthly, both in its origin and its work. There ought not to be anything in this teaching which shocks or disgusts or disappoints us. We shall only, indeed, have to examine it closely, and we shall find that our high-soaring visions of marriage imply not a little mistaken sentiment, while the doctrine of our great wholesome-minded Teacher is both sound and sublime. The greatest merit of this, as of all his doctrines, is, that it is adapted to the needs of men, as on the one hand material, and on the other spiritual, beings. It allows for the fact that so long as spiritual beings are upon the earth, they have not progressed beyond the material stage of their existence and that the conditions of the school of the senses present natural educational opportunities, of which every

man must avail himself if he would develop normally and continuously. If we do not grasp this healthy doctrine, we are in great danger of cultivating a premature spirituality which takes the form of sentimentalism and which, therefore, involves much that is unpractical and even unwholesome.

When we come to consider how our views of marriage may be brought into line with the working ideals which guide our actions day by day, we find that all worldly transactions are made in accordance with a law of demand and supply and that marriage is no exception to the rule. Roughly and honestly speaking, it is a matter of buying and selling. We have grown so squeamish and superfine that we have come to think that marriage treated as a commercial transaction ought to be ranked among the customs of savages. But if we will be honest with ourselves, we shall see that these customs have a sound basis of principle which civilized men must appropriate and develop, rather than despise and neglect, if they would make marriage quite satisfactory as an economic institution.

The problem as to how the rights of the purchaser in this civic transaction are to be secured, centres round that of the position and training of women. Their duties as wives are two in number—the making of a home and the rearing of citizens for the State. The economic problem now resolves itself into a question of the training of housewives and mothers. The topic is a hackneyed one, for it is now fifty years since Mr. Herbert Spencer did the work of a voice crying in the wilderness for this culpably neglected branch of education and declared it to be of such great importance, not only for domestic, but also for national life, that it might be considered as no mere department of education, but as all-inclusive and supreme, in the sense that it marks out the goal of human training and to a certain extent shadows forth the principles on which that training should proceed. But those who have hitherto attacked the question have gone to work in too narrow and materialistic a spirit. The consequence is that very few steps have been taken towards a practical solution of its difficulties, and those movements and institutions which have been started for the purpose have attracted sympathizers whose numbers are ridi-

culously small, considering the universality of the interests which are involved. Before any such schemes will be successful, our people will have to possess education much higher and culture much broader than the present conditions of society allow them to enjoy. In England at least, we have advanced to the dangerous and misty borderland which divides a people unconsciously taught by nature from one which is civilized by the elaborately wrought creations of art. The crisis is regarded as very serious by many thinkers, one of whom sets forth the situation thus—"Divided from the healthy influences of nature and of a simple economy, nothing can reclaim us now but machinery, organization, definite interaction, common effort, directed not merely to force expansion at the extremes, but to check corruption at the core—not solely to accumulate means of living, but to restore a value to life." That one of the dangers which form part of what this writer calls "The White Peril," is the estimation in which marriage is held, no one can doubt who has studied the various prophecies which have lately been uttered in certain quarters, to the effect that monogamy may in the future be no longer an honored institution among us. Evidently marriage must come to be the result of conviction and of high purpose, rather than of necessity or social convention, if it is to make for progress in the time to come. Custom and instinct must not be our guides in this matter. We must be cultured enough to make the interests of civilization our interests, and then we shall cease to be animals even though we lead an earthly life, and shall be capable of forming those ancient ideals of civic virtue and national zeal, which in artistic Athens subordinated the individual to the state without suppressing his individuality. The motives which lead men to marry in the present day are much too personal. We have derived our views of love between the sexes from the half-penny paper and the six-shilling novel, not from the broad-minded and human-hearted prophet of whom Lowell was the representative when he said,

"That love for one from which there doth not spring
Wide love for all, is but a worthless thing."

The evil of the narrower view is that marriage comes to be

considered as an end rather than a beginning. If once the larger view became predominant, the yet vexed question of the place of woman in society would assume quite a new aspect. Women would be expected to have much higher and broader qualifications than they at present possess, and the purchaser in matrimonial negotiations would demand far more than coquetish ways or a fine person, which the popular literature of the latter years of the nineteenth century taught the masses to admire more than any other gifts and graces. A man who hoped to take a woman into partnership with him in his life work, would not wish to treat his wife as a toy or a child, who is to be addressed in terms of endearment and who is not expected to have much dignity. He would want a companion who could see truly both the gay and the tragic sides of life and who could meet all the responsibilities of her position with ability and cheerfulness. A new woman of this kind would not exactly be the cold and stately English dame of bygone days. She would have the courage and the liveliness which the higher education undoubtedly imparts to women, joined to the modesty and repose in which the woman of to-day is woefully lacking.

A practical treatment of the training of wives precludes the discussion of the vexed problem of University education for women. Perhaps it is not yet possible to decide whether very advanced intellectual training best fits a woman for home duties. Perhaps our home-life would have to be considerably modified by women who have received special education of a more severely practical type, before the more highly intellectual women will find in it their appropriate sphere. If, however, our nation as a whole were more intellectual, there is little doubt that those women who have gone through a college course would be considered worthy above others to become wives and to bring up children, because a University education gives the mind breadth and repose. It suppresses the emotionalism to which women are prone and gives them not only balance of mind, but also public spirit, without which home life cannot make for progress. The writer who speaks of "The White Peril," would probably think the same, for he says, in reference to the urgent educational problem of the day—"The hu-

manist education alone can save the world from barbarism of taste and materialism of spirit, more truly to be dreaded than anything from which man suffered when he lived on the bosom of nature, even in the most despised ages of faith, fable and imagination. The relation that luxury bears to the higher efforts of mind and spirit is inverse." Now there is no doubt that England is in danger of declining into luxury and into apathy in relation to "the things that are more excellent." It is to be hoped, therefore, that we shall expect the mothers of our nation to possess the highest culture in addition to technical knowledge of their duties in the time to come. It would be wise, however, to let this ideal alone for the present and see how under existing conditions a practical improvement might be made in the education of women.

The enquiry is rather discouraging, for after all no special scheme, and certainly no legal system, can be worked out until public opinion has been educated to admit the necessity of such a scheme, and public opinion can only be led up to this point by means of the general branches and methods of education which are now in vogue, and among which modern developments of women's general education play an important and useful part. It is not unreasonable to suppose that, had general education gone far enough and that had English speaking people more loyalty and less of the shopkeeper spirit which makes money-grubbing the aim of living and writes on all men's hearts the motto that man lives by bread alone, there might arise among fathers in their midst, a custom of giving a dowry of a sound training for marriage to every one of their daughters who became engaged and who was therefore destined to undertake the keeping of a home and the education of children. There is no reason why such a custom should not be as universal and as binding in this country as social opinion makes the giving of a pecuniary dowry in some other nations or the capturing of a bride by force in certain savage tribes. Indeed, there is every reason why it should become so important among a highly cultured people as to be neglected only at the price of creating public scandal or courting the interference of the law. The principle involved in the custom would be, of course, that since a man is

bound to maintain his wife, that wife is bound to perform certain definite duties for her husband. But no doubt the opinions which many advanced thinkers and men of science hold on the subject of marriage would have to be supported by a very large number of followers, before they could be made the basis of a new social system or of legal enactment.

As, however, it is not absurd to suppose that the State might one day become interested in the rearing of its sons and daughters and in the moralizing and beautifying of its cities, rather than in the acquiring of territory outside its jurisdiction, it is worth while to make a few suggestions as to what the new training might be. A course of training might be arranged to cover one or two or three years, according to the circumstances of the students. Some part of that time might be devoted to housewifery and the rest to learning the theory and practice of education. Those who are so poor that they are bound to give all their time to wage-earning labor, might receive this technical training in State schools, the curricula of which were adapted to the probable requirements of their future homes, while women whose fathers could afford to give them a dowry might be sent to higher schools with longer and more elaborate curricula. Of course there would be great difficulty in drawing up a scheme of sufficient elasticity to suit all cases. Different arrangements, for instance, would have to be made and different grades of schools established, respectively, for women of independent means and for middle class women and for women who are destined to fill a very high place in society. Moreover, the issues involved would be of the greatest moment. Engagements, for example, would become almost as important as marriage and the breach of promise and divorce laws would have to be modified.

Tremendous difficulties of another kind, also, would make the very attempt to scheme out a workable plan appear almost ridiculous. One of these would be the inability of many parents to settle even a small sum of money on each of their daughters in view of a possible future marriage, considering that women often marry late in life and most fathers are obliged nowadays to give their girls a training quite early in life for

remunerative work other than that of the married woman. Perhaps the homes of women of the dowried class would be well regulated enough to supply a domestic education which would form a qualification for the passing of a simple examination in household craft and economy without special training, so that only the mastery of the rudiments of educational discipline would be wanting as a preparation for marriage. Then, of course, the expense would be trifling. In the case of the poorer classes, the greatest difficulty would probably be the intellectual attainments and the culture of the students, which would not, perhaps, be such as to render the acquirement of so much as the simplest educational truths at all profitable. Perhaps, too, this incompetence would be aggravated by the justifiable refusal of the ratepayers to accept the technical instruction of their poorer sisters as an additional pecuniary burden and by a consequent curtailing of the earlier primary education to provide funds for the probable future training. But the difficulties, moral, social and intellectual, would not be insuperable and even granting that they will be insuperable for many a long year, surely the ideal of attaching the highest responsibility to parenthood is great enough to warrant the crudest suggestions as to how that ideal is to be realized.

For national progress it is of the greatest moment that we should work towards this ideal, for present marriage laws and customs give women an inferior position in society, and it is a truism that the progress which a nation has achieved may be measured by the respect in which the women who share it are held. It is the confusion which at present exists in people's minds as to the work which a married woman is expected to do, which puts her in a position of inferiority. The woman's work is not looked upon as having a money value and thus marriage practically becomes, on the side of the man, a purchase of a slave, not of certain services rendered by a human co-worker who is a servant of the community. For this reason, self respecting and independent-minded women, who make the best wives and mothers, do not care to marry nowadays. In spite of recent legislation in her favor, the married woman still has no economic rights, nor will her position ever be any better

until it becomes a generally recognized thing that she is bound to render certain definite services for which the husband is bound to pay. Of course all such proposals as have been made from time to time in America, with the object of compelling husband and wife to enter into a legal agreement about money matters before marriage, must always be considered premature and one-sided and even ridiculous, so long as women do not receive special training for wifehood. Before they can do their just part both to men and to themselves, we shall have to create a society the ideals of which are so lofty and patriotic, that no self-respecting woman can wish to receive pay at the hands of her husband without knowing her duties thoroughly, any more than she can wish in the present state of public opinion to have money doled out to her at irregular intervals and frequently in a grudging spirit, according to the practice of many husbands who think they respect their wives. In justice, however, it must be said, that under present conditions this method of managing household affairs is a wise one, although its necessity is the fault of the purchaser in the matrimonial contract. As a rule he does not demand in his wife qualities which are worth paying for and he has to keep the money in his own hands to prevent it from being squandered, thus arrogating to himself a power which he has every temptation to abuse.

The use of business language in treating of marriage would jar on many people who want to be able to breathe in their homes that restful kind of atmosphere, which after all no training can give any woman the power to create,

"In this world of worldlings, where
Souls rust in apathy, and ne'er
A great emotion shakes the air."

But this notion is based on a false conception of love, the maker of homes. Our views of love and marriage are cheap and commonplace like almost everything else in our present-day city life, which has become so vulgar and restless and ugly. Love between the sexes is not a practical, working love to us,

"A thing to walk with, hand in hand,
Through the every-dayness of this work day world,
Baring its tender feet to every flint,
Yet letting not one heart-beat go astray
From beauty's law of plainness and content."

To many of us it is a gaudy, useless, music-hall nothing, and to many, again, it soars,

"High floating o'er earth's clouds on faëry wings."

We should lose none of the finer and higher qualities which are without money and without price, if we treated love as a practical worker making use of earthly tools. Indeed, we should only be building up a firm foundation for the cultivation of that which is priceless, if we considered love as no idle thing and secured to our daughters and perhaps to our sons also, a sound education of the senses and of the mind for the guidance of love. And after all, it is only prejudice that makes the ideal of a trained wifehood seem unpractical, or detrimental to men's highest interests. Prejudice, to be sure, is a stubborn fact to deal with, but why do we boast of our higher education if prejudice is to be our conqueror in the end?

Deeper considerations, however, will reveal the fact that the objections of the prejudiced in this matter do not altogether lack weight, though they cannot be said to establish any case whatever against training for motherhood. Those among the objections which are just, simply go to prove, indeed, not that marriage as an economic institution is incompatible with high and lofty spiritual attainments, but only that marriage under any circumstances is incompatible with the highest life of which man is capable in rare moments of exaltation, which he reaches by painful effort or long sustained devotion. This truth need not lead us to suppose, however, that the plainer views of marriage would rob life of much of its poetry, or would bring down an institution which has been the centre of romance throughout man's history to the level of the commonplace work-a-day interests which are too familiar to call forth heroic energy or lofty enthusiasm; for poetry is spiritual, and we make a mistake if we suppose that the time of life at which men and women marry is the most poetical time of their lives,

and that the imagination is most vivid and active in youth. Even if we concede that the imagination works with greater energy in youth than at a later time, we must also acknowledge that it is not so fine in quality as mellow years can make it, although, of course, the man who allows himself to be materialized and to get soiled in the strife of existence and who fails, therefore, to follow the natural course of human development, inevitably loses or impairs his imaginative power. The imagination of a very young man is strongly tinged, as a rule, with the colors of the material world. It is only in exceptional cases that it is purely spiritual, and it is, therefore, only towards the end of life that imagination proper can as a rule be considered natural and healthy. No doubt Wordsworth is right in ascribing very lofty imagination to little children. But children have no heavy responsibilities to answer. Their spirituality is only an earnest of the time of which the prophet was thinking when he said—"It doth not yet appear what we shall be." The processes of education must wake them up to weigh and measure and reason, before they can be made into worthy citizens. We cannot have dreamers in business and politics, and they are anomalies even in education and religion.

Good citizenship is the price which Nature has assigned for the privilege of developing spiritual power. The preliminary discipline is necessary, as a means of establishing a firm basis for the superstructure which every man ought to begin to build up into his life, as the links which connect him with the present world-order begin to dissolve. The poet Waller was right, therefore, in saying that,

"The soul's dark cottage, battered and decayed,
Lets in new light through chinks that time hath made."

It is a significant fact that the poet uttered this sentiment when he was on the brink of death. It is the natural and characteristic utterance of an aged man who has great powers of imagination. But we cannot help being sorry that Waller did not utter such words earlier in his career. It was only when the world in which he had dissipated his finest energies was fading away from him, that the worn-out courtier at last allowed his imagination to have its way with him and wrote—

"The soul, with nobler resolutions decked,
The body stooping, does herself erect.
No mortal parts are requisite to raise
Her that unbodied can her Master praise.
The seas are quiet, when the winds give o'er,
So calm are we, when passions are no more;
For then we know how vain it was to boast
Of fleeting things so certain to be lost."

If, then, lofty imagination is only possible in a very limited degree to men and women who are in the thick of life's responsibilities, it is obvious that none of the poetry of life would be lost, were we to take the common sense and almost commonplace view of marriage.

On the contrary, we should become much more poetical and imaginative, because healthy ideas on the subject would make it possible for men to comply with the conditions of spiritual birth and growth. Moreover such ideas would obviate the disillusionment which marriage so very often means. Many people have a curious notion that the creations of the imagination are bound to fade away before the hard necessities of daily work. This notion is characteristic of the faithless, prosaic philistinism of our materialistic age, which makes it hard for us to realize that our inner world is just as much a region of fact as the outer world. If we want to describe anything as unreal, we call it imaginary. We cannot realize that, as Emerson tells us, Poetry also is Science, and that the only reason why we do not accept the creations of the imagination, is that they are facts which belong to our future rather than to the present.

If we could believe in the life of the imagination, marriage would not be an all-important institution to us. It is all important to us at present because we think that in marriage "the greatest thing in the world" has its fullest and most characteristic expression. But love is spiritual, not sexual, and after all we make far too much of sex. After all it does not mark out a fundamental difference between the minds and spirits of men and women. Yet we persist in giving it a higher place than it deserves, and thus we fail to make it useful to us in its proper sphere. Sex has little to do with love, for its work is

that of dividing, not that of uniting. So long as we live in a society founded on and maintained by sexual relations, so long will it be necessary that modesty on the one hand and chivalry on the other, should keep men and women at a distance from one another.

"A God, a God their severance ruled!
And bade betwixt their shores to be
The unplumb'd, salt, estranging sea."

The dividing work of sex becomes very obvious in places of education where men and women learn together, and where we are often forced to observe, perhaps with a certain bitterness which can with difficulty be prevented from developing into cynicism, that dual education is not altogether a success. It is very seldom that the tone and spirit of a college is such, that any real bonds of friendship can arise between the men and women. The observation almost inclines one to think with Schopenhauer, that when we act in accordance with the dispositions to which we are bound and limited by sex, we are the dupes and toys of Nature. At any rate it may be said that sex need not play nearly so important a part in society as it actually takes in our present civilization. If we would escape the sour views of Schopenhauer, we must also recognize clearly that sex is the basis of marriage, but not of love, for which reason we must disassociate the conception of sex from that of the very loftiest thoughts and emotions which the most highly developed human beings are capable of knowing. We need not sourly and weakly scorn sex because we recognize its temporal character and its humble uses. A bold, sensible acknowledgment of its limits need only free our manhood from the silliness which corrupts society by making conjugal relations a kind of wicked secret and casts a glamor round marriage which actual experience of the life which it inaugurates almost invariably dispels. We want to have homes built up on sound economic principles, and then we shall be able to soar into the regions whither love and imagination lead.

At the same time we ought to be careful lest we make too much of domestic life, as the Germans do. This ideal retards progress and is harmful to the highest interests of a nation, be-

cause it gives far too little freedom to women, both married and unmarried. To serve those highest interests, indeed, a nation must have a large unselfish aim and an ideal that points beyond its own existence and therefore gives marriage, to which, of course, the maintenance and advancement of the State is due, a non-essential place in human affairs. We have forgotten in these days that asceticism, though it is always rare, is both natural and necessary to the life of a nation, and that if our social arrangements crush this form of high thinking and plain living out of existence, our morality and spirituality will suffer. But if in modern times we recover the monastic ideal which seems to be so fast breaking down, it will find expression in forms very different from any in which it has shown itself before. Probably it will take a Tolstoian form, though it is to be hoped that it will not cause men to revel in the world's passions in the earlier part of their career and then preach doctrines of consecration in the latter part. It is not cloistered ascetics whom the world of to-day awaits, but men and women who will do its intellectual and spiritual work in perfect outward freedom, who are shut out from no society, and who are bound by no necessity but that which the ideal of the self enforces. It is chiefly women who would benefit by the restoration of asceticism to an honored place among the ideals of the modern world; for the unthroning of marriage from the place which it now holds as the chief generative factor in civilization, would bring about a better division of employments among women. There would be room for the Marys of society who do not wish to undertake the duties of housekeeping or of motherhood, and who are capable of making their lives warm and intense and human by purely spiritual friendship; and we should appreciate their work, although we should not necessarily think that they had chosen the better part.

The view that he whose life work is purely spiritual does the work of a man, no less than he who brings up sons and daughters, can, of course, only be held ultimately by believers in the immortality of the soul. There seems to be little prospect that it will be adopted as a national principle in England, for although so many modern thinkers treat the immortality of the

soul as an indisputably established fact, and although the State is still founded nominally upon religion, we appear to have very little spiritual life of any sort to-day. Yet the believers are many and those many cannot be without hope that the near future will find us capable of realizing that the function of the State as a whole is the highest life-making. The natural result of a materialistic reading of Nature is a belief in polygamy, free love, temporary marriage and other animal institutions. That we are now threatened by these horrors is a fact which ought to awaken us to the necessity of getting just and balanced views of both the material and spiritual duties of man. The material side of his obligations we seem to know well enough. In fact our knowledge of these is almost morbid. We need now to learn that the spiritual is natural. A great physician of the materialistic nineteenth century has vividly brought out this truth by saying—"Life is so far from being the sum of the functions that resist death, that it is a constant part of the history of life that its exercise leads naturally to decay, and through decay to death." Here he expresses the material side of man's life. In another passage he expresses the doctrine of the resurrection in the words—"Other portions of the human mind are the reason and the conscience . . . by which there is established between man and the brutes a great difference, not in degree alone, but in kind. The spirit differs from all the faculties in its independence of our organization, for it is exercised best in complete abstraction from all that is sensible, it is wholly independent of the organization of the brain, wholly independent also of the education of the understanding." The life of man is, therefore, a natural progress from the material to the spiritual. For this natural tendency the education and general laws of society ought to provide. Perhaps the most important part of this provision should consist in giving marriage its proper place. At any rate there ought to be no such thing in civilized society as marriage, the permanent bonds of which seem intolerable to both men and women as soon as they begin to think and to question the usefulness of this institution, sanctified as it is merely by custom and by religious practice. And if

we have any spiritual sense or any great hopes for the future of the nations, we ought to realize that Tennyson's way of letting the ape and tiger die, as expressed in the epithalamium with which he closes his "In Memoriam," is by no means the shortest way. The simpler and the swifter way in modern times, would be that of making room for nature's monks. Some of us may still embrace the doctrine of the great nineteenth century poet, who was all too sensitive to the materialism of his age. Some of us may still feel that the submissive animal within us is yet so strong, that the best things cannot be realities to us. But we ought to remember that the wisest Teacher whom the world has ever known said—"In the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven. He that is able to receive it, let him receive it."

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WHAT IS RELIGION?

THE divergent and contradictory uses of the word religion are due, one feels, not only to the difficulty of comprehending the nature of religion but also to the disposition of those who have written upon the subject to further an ulterior purpose by the definitions they propose. The Evangelical controversialist, for instance, seems bent on excluding by his definition what he calls the superstitions of man, or of sharply distinguishing between the so-called natural religions and revealed religion. The moralist seeks apparently to disparage the reputed influence of religion on conduct, and the thorough-going secularist to put religion in the way of inevitable extinction. When the subject is approached, as at present, with a purely scientific interest, all such purposes of doctrinal and philosophical strategy must of course be relinquished. We cannot concern ourselves, either with the relative superiority of a particular form of religion or even with the fate of religion itself. Our only legitimate purpose is to ascertain and express the truth.

Although there cannot be two opinions with regard to the